27th July 1957]

APPENDIX IV.

[Vide answer to starred question No. 310 asked by Sri K. Sattanatha Karayalar at the meeting of the Legislative Assembly held on 27th July 1957, page 569 supra.]

Answer to clause (a) of the question.

Deep-sea fishing operations so far have been mainly to survey the fishing grounds and to demonstrate to the fishermen and the interested public the advantages of going further out into the sea with better fishing crafts and tackles than what the local fishermen use, and thereby increase the catches.

The Madras Fisheries Department had eight motor fishing vessels purchased from the Naval disposal a long time ago but they had become old and inefficient, and hence they were condemned and disposed of one by one recently. This State received a few fishing vessels and other equipments under the Technical Co-operation Mission and Food and Agriculture Organisation Aids for use in deep-sea fishing during the past two or three years. As a result of the Reorganisation of States, however, only one vessel 'Meenakshi', has now been left with this State. The Motor Fishing Vessel 'Gudjon', one of the Technical Co-operation Mission vessels, which has been allotted to the Mysore State has been allowed to be retained temporarily in this State for exploratory fishing on the South-East coast till such time as Gear Experts for Purse Seine operations are provided when it would be taken away to the West Coast. The Government have urged on the Government of India to secure some more vessels under the Foreign Aid programme but the prospects appear to be little. The operations are now conducted with Motor Fishing Vessels 'Meenakshi' and 'Gudjon' referred to above, a few power-fishing vessels and luggers.

An investigation of fishing grounds has been done with the assistance of foreign Fishery Experts who have been assigned to this State under the Food and Agriculture Organisation Aid. The surveys so far made and the investigations conducted by the Food and Agriculture Organisation Experts have revealed the existence of rich fishing grounds off the Coasts of Pamban, Nagapattinam, Cuddalore, Porto Novo, Ennore, etc. A vast majority of the rich fishing grounds still remain to be fully explored for want of a good number of big modern fishing vessels. The problem is linked up with the availability of considerable finance and foreign exchange in the case of purchase of modern fishing boats from foreign countries and the capacity of boat-building firms in India to cope with such jobs.

2. The Government have taken the following steps to improve the marine fisheries in general :—

(1) Popularising and distribution of Pablo-boats (Mechanised boats) to fishermen on hire-purchase system.

(2) Distributing nylon nets and hooks to fishermen at subsidised rates.

(3) Issue of long-term loans to Fishermen Co-operative Societies for purchasing fishing crafts and tackles.

(4) Supply of fishery requisites like timber at concessional rates.

(5) Training of fishermen in the management of powered-boats and improved methods of fishing gear at the Fisheries Training Centres with the help of Foreign Experts assigned to this State.

3. The following measures have also been taken to encourage deep-sea fishing :—

(1) Arranging the publication of a pamphlet on Deep-Sea Fishing operations for the benefit of fishermen and public connected with fishing industry.

(2) Preparation of a Handbook on Deep-Sea Fishing operations for the guidance of the staff engaged in deep-sea fishing operations.

(3) Exemption was got for fishing crafts from customs formalities relating to formal entry and getting port clearance.

Answer to clause (b) of the question.

The Government wanted to include a Scheme for establishing a Deep-Sea Fishing Station in the East Coast in the Second Five-Year Plan but the Government of India did not approve of it, as they said that they were themselves establishing a station at Cochin which would take up work on the East Coast also.

Deep-sea fishing operations off Colachel and Leepuram in Kanyakumari district by trawlers and contemplated if such Deep-Sea Fishing Station is established. Meanwhile the question of establishing a Fishing Harbour at Leepuram is under investigation. The Food and Agriculture Organisation Harbour Specialist who made preliminary investigation has suggested that Leepuram is suitable. Off-shore fishing with powered boats in this Coast is proposed to be encouraged and recently two Pablo-boats were allotted to this district. It is hoped that more boats could be made available with the progress of the Five-Year Plan under which it is proposed to make 100 such boats.